

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TAGS: PFOR, MARR, CENTO, CE

SUBJ: CEYLONSE REACTION TO CENTO MID-LINK EXERCISE

1. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS ON CENTO MANEUVERS RAISED IN NATIONAL STATE ASSEMBLY (NSA) BY COMMUNIST PARTY, MOSCOW-WING AND FEDERAL PARTY (TAMIL COMMUNAL PARTY) MPS DECEMBER 3, DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, LAKSHMAN JAYAKODY, PROVIDED FIRST GSL REACTION TO MID-LINK EXERCISE. ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED CEYLON DAILY NEWS, JAYAKODY SAID SERI LANKA, AS CHAIRMAN OF AD HOC COMMITTEE ON INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE (IOPZ) PROPOSAL, WAS WATCHING HOW UN MEMBERS WERE "OBSERVING" IT. JAYAKODY WENT ON TO SAY THAT THESE NAVAL MANEUVERS WERE "VERY SENSITIVE MATTER" AND SRI LANKA HAD TO BE CAREFUL HOW IOPZ PROPOSAL WAS IMPLEMENTED. HE SAID PROPOSAL IS MAINLY AIMED AGAINST BIG POWER RIVALRY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF BASES IN INDIAN OCEAN. NO COUNTRIES WERE MENTIONED.

2. CENTO MID-LINK EXERCISE HAS BEEN FARILY PROMINENTLY COVERED IN PRESS DRAWING ON WIRE SERVICE REPORTS INCLUDING INDIAN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER'S CRITICAL COMMENTS ON EXERCISE. UP TO PRESENT, HOWEVER, THERE HAD BEEN NO OFFICIAL OR EDITORIAL COMMENT WHATSOEVER. GSL IS WITHOUT DOUBT TREAD-
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ING VERY SOFTLY ON THIS ONE, PARTLY BECAUSE OF GOOD RELATIONS

WITH PAKISTAN. IT SEEMS LIKELY GSL ALSO DOES NOT WANT
TO JEOPARDIZE POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING LARGE-SCALE ECONOMIC
LARGESSE FROM IRAN.
BYRNE

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